CAPE HATTERAS FOLKS

A Brief Study of a Queer Community.

TERRORS OF THE DIAMOND SHOALS

Among the Hatteras Life Savers and Light Keepers.

A Narrow Habitation that is Rapidly Disappearing Under a Sand Wave-A Diet of Fish, Oysters, Corn Meal, and Yopon Tea-A Community of Churchgoers-The Grosser Sins of Humanity Almost Unknownt Still the Place has its Drawhacks-Wrecks and Life Savers-Looted a Schooner-Hatteras Storms and Bea-

KINNARBET (Avon P. O.), Hatteras Island. N. C., July 5.-Who has not heard of Cape Hatteras, and of the storms that rage about it, and of the ships stranded and the lives lost on its treacherous shoals and in its mighty surfs? across the western ocean. When a cyclone forms in the torrid regions of the Atlantic, and lers foretelling its coming first appear, and because Cape Hatteras lies nearer the usual track of these storms than other American headlands. It is here that their full fury is more frequently manifested than at any other point on the coast. Indeed, on several occasions the course of the whirling gale has been so far to westward that its vortex has passed across the ings through the narrow ridge of sand that forms this coast line, and have closed up others. that in times past had for many years fur-

cause it is the most prominent point in a long

the Southern States, the fruiters and sugar hoats of the West Indies, the coffee carriers Hatteras, because its light tower is at most but a few miles out of their course; and having once seen its flashing signal or its broad spirais of black and white, the shipmaster is confident of his position, and can head away for his port with a corrected chart of his voyage.

It is, therefore, not a matter of wonder that the island just to the north of Cape Hatterns should have been called Bodies Island, from every year washed up on its sands.

Within the last two years THE SUN has sent its reporters among some queer people. Very different from any of these communities, but quite as curious and interesting, are the people who live on the sands of which Cape Hatteras forms the most prominent point.

On Hatterns Island there are a pl ponies and half a dozen horses, but no harness maker, no wagon maker, no blacksmith, no horseshoor, no carriage, no wagon. There are hundreds of cattle, but no butcher, no ment market, no milk dealer, no butter maker, no cheese maker; nor is butter or milk used save among a score or two of families, and that only on rare occasions. There is neither tailor nor dressmaker nor millier nor barber on the island, There are no lawyers, no lockups, no illegitimate children, no divorces, no paupers. No man wears a slik hat; no woman corset. There is neither hotel nor boarding house nor liquor dealer. There is no farmer on the island, nor did the people ever so much as see a reaper or a mewer or a plough or a grain cradie or a scythe. There are no apple trees. no peach trees, no pear trees, no plum trees, no ras; berries, no goo-eberries. They grind their corn (which they import from the mainland) in windmills when the wind favors, and when It doesn't they erind it by hand.

The young lokes never have either dances or church fairs or festivals. They never saw a theatre, a negro minstrel, or a circus. They have nelther ice cream nor strawberries. They never go plenicking. They do not get together and play any such games as snap-and-kiss-'em, forfeits, &c., which country young folks only so much. In one respect the women are treated like EQUAWS.

The best boats they use for fishing and oystoring are dugouts-boats hollowed from the trunks of trees-unit their mail is brought here in a dugout from Roanoke Island, forty-flya miles away to the north, to which point it is brought in a tiny schooner from Elizabeth City, fifty miles away to the west. And yet in this curious, old-fashioned community there is a telephone system in good working order, and one badly crowded tenement house.

Let the man who is troubled with insemnia.

because the noise and bustle of the city have overstrained his nerves; let the man who thinks he knows how both halves of the world live; let the man in search of pristing, not to say savage, simplicity, come to Kinnakeet. But let the man with the dyspecsia stay away. for he will die of the tortures he would escape If he came here. Very rarely, indeed, does a stranger visit Cape Hatteras, if the Government inspectors of lighthouses and life-saving stations are not counted as strangers. Now and then a peddler with his pack appears, Wreckers from Norfolk, and even from New York, sometimes come to the beach to help a stranded vessel, but with the exception of Mr. Frederick Hussey, and a friend from New York, who were here last winter, tourists have been unknown and unheard of on this island.

CHAPTER IL

HATTEBAS ISLAND. Within the memory of a few of the oldest puople Hatteras Island was covered with a thick forest, of which great live oak and red cedar were the principal trees. In these forests the inhabitants built their huts and made chapter Hill.

Chapte their little gardens. So thick were the forests

ALBEMARLE SOUND

ive years it has advanced half way across the

five years it has advanced half way across the island at kinnakee. If we may judge by the inroads made during the past sear inroads easily measured by the distance from the scrubby trunks of trees now dead, but living last summer, to the present crest of the wave, no shot on the island will be labitable north of Cape Hatteras fifteen years from now, save as the life savers live, in starious and huts built on the sand that is absolutely berren.

At kinnakeet the half of the island not yet covered is low. Itst, and for the most part swampy. The wells are from two to three feet deer. The water is brackish, and is not renerally used for drinking, rain water caught in barrels being used instond. But no one filters the water, and bilious fevers abound.

From Cape Hatteras half way to Hatteras Inlet six miles the island is from two to two and one-half miles wide, and is covered with a dense lorest, chiefly if ne and oak. A sweet water ginde like the Florida glades runs half way down the centre. The water in the glade is in places from six to seven feet deep, and fresh water ash—particularly tresh water robling, as they are called here, beautiful, bright-colored, oval-shipted fellows of five or six inches in length—are abundant. The woods are full of red deer and rabbits, aithough houses are scattered at intervals along the remainder or westerly half of this arm of the island is narrow, save at Durant's Point, where it is nearly two miles wide. No sand wave affects this part of the island, for the very good reason that the timber on it is not worth sending to market and has been allowed to stand. The cape itself is rather a shell than a sandy point, for it is composed of fice bits of broken red shell which give the wide, level barren a red glare in the sualight that is maddening to the eyes. For over half a mile back from the point the land is a dead level about four feet



of dunes that extend for two miles from the point, and then the forest enciosing the glade. The point of the cape is a narrow V-shaped spit that projects out to the southeast and slores away so gradually that the water is but seven feet deep a mile and a half from shore. To the stranger who loves nature there is an indescribable fascination about the surf on this cape. It is here that the waves from a thousand infles to the north and a thousand leagues to the south meet and break. It is here that the great rollers which forstell the eming hurricane first thunder on the strand. Even on a deal calm day, or with an off-shore breeze, such breakers as awake the echoes grather and dash interest over the blooder to point and hurr their shattered crests, searking and foaming white, twenty-live feet above the heal of the spectator. It is a scene to stir the blood. No matter what one's experiences may have been.

For a time, on his arrival, the spectator will have hard work to keep his cross off the surf, nor can be scatce resist the temptation to fling off his clothes and rush in to take part in the mad dance the waves seem inviting him to this temptation. This, the most dance part in the souther by a fisher new the surfunction but the sand and broken shells within half a mile, save only a colitary pret stock up near the point of the cape and away to sea. The surfunctions along the search found in the light of the land, and out past the point of the cape and away to sea. The surfurning on Cape linters is the most dangerous along the sand and significance, for when a daily is gradience, for when a shirt is stranded to the waves that he to the waves and it is searched by work and exposure the hone of the seamen is gone. It is not enough that when weakened by work and exposure the sing breaks up: the



JOHNNY MURPHY, FIFTH ASSISTANT KEEPER, AND HIS MISTRESS. current that always runs off shore will sweep them away from the help the hard offe savers might give them were they within reach. It is through this current that the sheals known as the Diamond and Outer Sheals have been created. It is the existence of these shoals that makes Hatterias such a terror to the navigator. Vessels rarely come ashore on the cape fiself, but no one knows or can know how many ships strike on the shoals beyond the cape, and, breaking up there, drift away to sea leaving no tongue nor trace to tell the story of their fate.

CHAPTER III,

en building, meant originally for two families. The families of the assistant keepers are large and likely to be larger. The Lighthouse Board in its report for 1899 says:

The third assistant light keeper at this station is in thates, under the principal keeper at this station is in the sea, under the principal keeper at the station in the keeper at the station in the station is the station of the principal station. The station is the station of the station in the st what im addition vicinity. The can be omit for \$3.00. The cottage has not been built ut. Very lkely it will be erected soon, however, and on \$\frac{\pi}{2}\$ to contract. There is need for a man brea Holman of Indiana at the head of a constitute to evertual some of these lighthouse outries. If one may sudge by this recommendation. With pine lumber, first quality, eding in \$1\$ per 1.00 foot at the saw mids just cross the Fam Ico Sound, and with needhanies

the bencom mentions, is a little plain while light, located half way between the Cape and the tich lower. It is there as a range light, to e aide the little consters bound in to tell when to after their course and theor north through the sine between the point and the Diamond shoals.

I note sain, to lessen the dangers of Cape Hatteras, proposes to build a lighthouse on the Outer Diamond Shoal. By an act approved march 2 1883, 4200 000 was appropriated for the purpose and authority given to the Lighthouse lound to contract for the construction which a lighthouse at a price not to exceed \$500,000. The Board is now waiting for \$300,000 before advertising for a contract.

CHAPTER IV.

Three entries in the light keepers' legbook are of interest. On the night of Aug. 27, 1886, at ten minutes to 10 o'clock, the Charleston enriquake was first felt in the light tower. It was terrificing. The great tower "waved to aid fro like a reed in the wind," as the log says. "There was a sound as of a cannon or thurder." "The machinery was stopped," and it was necessary to call the principal keeper to aid to a sound a soft at 10 and in the stopped of the light tower the lamp was deserted. To the keepers it seemed that the tower surely would LIGHT REFPERS' TALES.



signal was heard was thick fog with a heavy southeast gate blowing."

A steamer had struck on the outer sheal. The Captain, standing on the bridge, blow the whistle for help three times a minute for almost haif an hour. Then the ship broke up, and he and his crew were plunged into the feaming water and were drifted away to sea and lost. Nor did any timber or sear or splinter of that vessel ever reach shore. Not a year goes by that the keepers do not record some pitful appeal for help from the outer shoal—a blast on a whistle or a tlare of torch or of rocket. It may be for an hour, it may be for more than a day that that skinal is heard or seen above the calcant the fog, but sooner or later it cases and one more crew has gone to eternity.

Never but once in the history of Cape Hatteras has a man drifted ashore from a ship wrecked on the outer shoal. How it happened that he should have come to land, when all others have been swept away to sea hopelessly, is a mystery.

On the night of Noy, 25, 1880, Principal

Reoper George A. Bilven was relieved from duty at 2 o'clock in the morning, and coming down from the tower ran over to his keune. A gale, laden with ley spray, was driving in from the sea with such force that it was with diffi-



The control of the property of the control of the c

son a light one which does not average a wreck



cape hatteras lipe savers—capt. B. B. Dalley, ging their bont eight miles through the sand, they reached the cape, and there, without waiting to rest, they plunged into the surf. Only those who have seen and felt a winter surf can appreciate what is meant by "after taking several heavy seas we got through the surf." Nor without experience can one understand the later of that pull of eight miles out to sea. And yet all this was child's play to the difficulty of getting back.

The afternoon was nearly half gone ere they could get alloat, and night came down on them as they headed back for the shore in the face of the deadly off-shore current running two miles an hour to carry them out to sea.

Faint with hunger and exhausted by five hours of unbroken labor at the ears and clothed in garments still with ice, they arrived at the back of the breakers, took the wrecked seamen into the surf boat and then, encumbered so that but four mon could handle the ears, once more plunged into the surf.

"What does a life saver's wife think when she knows her husband is facing such peril as that?" I said to Mrs. Fugh.

"I was thinking," said she, turning a serious face toward her husband, what a good thing it was for the wrecked seamen that Dave was at the steering oar."

Between the 15th and 21st of January, 1889,

"I was thinking," said she, turning a serious face toward her husband, "what a good thing it was for the wrecked seamen that Dave was at the steering oar."

Petween the 18th and 21st of January, 1889, ten men lost their lives off Cape Hatteras, and thinteen men were taken from wreeks by the life savers. Ten were from the barkentine Walter S. Massey, brought ashore on the night of the 18th. On the 20th (Sunday) the schooner Alicy R. Chester was wrecked on the outer Diamond and five mon were lost and three were saved. On the 21st the schooner J. R. Anderson was dismasted on the Wimble shoals north of the Cape, and at that time three wrecks were visible from Hatteras lighthouse. A fourth vessel was at anchor near the shoals with distress signals flying. The Anderson was eventually taken into Norfolk, but the rest were lost.

Two other wrecks off Hatteras deserve special mention, for one of them swells the life-saver's bosom with pride, and the other makes Lim hang his head.

On becember 18, 1884, the barkentine Ephriam Williams, with vellow pine from Savannah to Providence, and a crew of nine all told found herself driving on the inner shoal off Cape Hatteras. The crew made haste to drop the anchor, but after bringing to safely the gale increased to such an extent that on the 21st she parted lorg-able, struck the shoal, pounded over it, and finally sank off Kinnakeet. At that the life savers got out their boat, and under Capt. B. B. Dailey of the Cape Point station, assisted by keeper Patrick Ethrilge of the tree is Hill station, put to sea. The wreek was six miles off shore but every man of the crew was saved. They were in a pittid condition, having been without food or that time in her ringing. The savers went off shore, that to arress voted gold media to the seven who were in the boat. The media shove its weight in gold are Sarfmen J. B. Jenet and though the gold was worth between \$10 and \$20. The media and the savers went of the seven who were in the boat the media above its weight in gold are Sarfmen J. B. Je ing her constantly, so that if she should break her cable and come ashore they could quickly fire a line over her or go to her assistance with the boats. On the 17th the fatal hour came, and she struck the beach half way between kinnakeet and the Case Point station. In less than half an hour, and while yet the life savers were nearly a mile away, she went to pieces, and all hands were drowned. Four todies came ashore and were buried in the sand, but two others were never heard from.

The the savers made a mistake in waiting for her to beach. They should have gone to her as som as her distress stands were seen. An unknown bard was moved by this to write a poem and leave it in the public highway where it would fait into the bands of the kinnakeet crew of life savers. The following stanzas will illustrate the hinterns idea of pootry.

The wind was blowing light.

The wind was blessing U.Sh.
The organ run from fag.
The schoner John Stea. the supposed,
Lay sunken quite near the bar.

into two groups, the men and love going to one door, and the women, girls, and babies going to the other. Within were four rows of wooden benches facing the pulpit, besides a row on each side of the pulpit. The congregation entirely filled the house. The sears at the side of the pulpit were occupied by old men and women, while the rear seats were taken by bys and girls, who were frowned at by the elders occasionally for giggling.

For a few minutes the prescher turned the leaves of the only hymn book in the house and those of the Bible, and looked about on the people who were coughing clearing their the only, and digeting about on their seats. Then, in a voice that dwelf on nonely every word until trended in "ali," he read the opening byme, armouncing its title in alvance, and the fact that it was common metre. Having inished reading it, he began over again and read the first two lines, after which the congregation, led by the proacher, sang:

Fa as they when a very my still declines.

Two more lines were then read and sung.

The year of a converge whill do e him.

Two more lines were then read and sung, and so the hum was finished. A brief prayer followed; then at old brother in the amen corner began to sing all alone the old hum:

Anami I associated the eccretions.

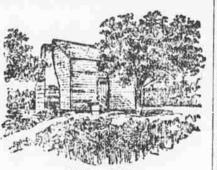
For three lines he was unassisted. Then another brother gined in. Two lines further two more were moved to assist, and then the thin, anavering voice of a good old sister rose above the voices of the men, and so volce after voice of man and woman took up the tune, until by the time the humn was half inished nearly all the congregation were asking:

Is this ville we out a friested to granaes.

To each if it mees on it of the out.

Is this visible we corid a friesend to granace, To conteit the meron it to do od?

After the hymn a pealin was read and the preacher said. "Brother Scarborough will lead us in prayer." At this all knelt down as they had done during the previous prayer. Brother Scarborough was a tail old man, with thin hands, hollow cheeks, deep sunk eyes, and long slivery hair carefully combest back behind his ears. He had been sitting on the front seat at the side of the pulpit, and, when invited to pray, he slid off the seat, and, getting on his knees, bent his head over the beach till his white hair fell down and almost touched the board. The noise of the shifting congregation was hushed quickly, and then the old man becan, in a voice so low as to be soarcely audible ten feet away, to say, "To Thee, Almighty God, the Greator of the universe, who art from everlasting to everlasting," while the brother about him and the preacher in sighs and whisners said. "Yes, Lord, yes." "Yes, our God!" "Even so." From words of praise the brother passed to expressions of thanks for the necessatics, the comforts, and the luxuries of this life as he knew them, and for the blessings of the life to come, as he expected them to be. He passed



THE PARSONAGE.



a native shrub akin to the mate of South America. The new shoots of the shrub with leaves attached, are gathered in September and placed in a dug-out trough, and there shoused up fine with an axe. Meantime a big file is built near by, and a lot of stones heared red hot. Then the sopon cuttings are dumeed into a barrel until the bottom is covered four or five inches deen, and on this is placed a laver of hot stones. Alternate invers of yepon and stones fill the barrel, and the barrel is then covered as near airtisht as may be, and is left thus for a day or two. Then the yepon is taken out and dried, it is steeped into a bere age as any tea would be, and it is the best thing put on the Hatteras table. They do occasionally have veal and mutton and in the season some wild fowl, but because the wild lowly any governally be shipped to Elizabeth City by schooner inheaty miles and sold,



and then nailing boards to the poles, clapboard inshien. The live is built on the sand in the centre of this chimney, and in cold weather the family gather around the live, sitting on benenes placed against the walls of the chimney, with their hands held out to the flames. Now and then a zirl or a woman gets her dress on fire and is bernel to death, say once a year or two. A wide piece of a board nailed to the end of a pole and leaned against the top of the chimney on the weather side serves to lengthen that side and so promote the draft. The smake, nevertheless, gets in their eyes, and often fills the room, and the walls of every Hatteras home are biackened by this usage.

The windows are few in number and small in size—some house, have none at all, and the doors are loft open, save in the coldest weather, day and night the vear round. When the roof gives out it is commonly patched with an old sail as shown in the picture, which is from a photograph.

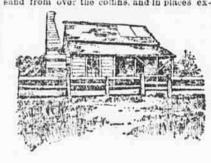
If there is a plastered house on the island I have not seen it. I have heard of two or three. A majority of the houses are not even celled. The wall ornaments consist of advertising iithographs, and even cigarette lithographs find places there, though the female forms are very scantily clothed.

The islanders sleep on feather beds invariably. The bedsteads are of the old post and rail sort, strung with ropes that pass around knobs in the rail. Even where no bedstead is used the shakedown is of feathers.

The Hatteras homestead consists of from one to twelve acros of land with the house. B.

B. Dalley, the Cape Folin life-saving station keeper, owns several hundred acros, but he is an exception. The ordinary estate sells for from \$100 to \$300.

There are three school houses on Hatteras Island, and school is held in each for one month each year. The school house at Kinnakeet is a sample of the three. It is 15x22 feet large, has neither deak nor chair, stove nor chimney, door nor window in it. There are holes where doors and windows should be, and two in the roof, 2 nd then untiling boards to the poles, clapboard



stones and boards over them are pitiful to emplate, in the little mound of earth had been rounded up after a burial they went away and cut the frunk of a cedar into the shape of a bead stone. For many years old Dameran Meekins carved in rudo letters the Inscriptions on these monuments. The oldest unnument despinorable is that of "Methalis Farrow, who cled now the 12 day, 1808, aged 1 year, 8 mo and black."

5 days."
Here is an ther inscription as near letter for letter as possible with the use of type: No THEMBER THE 15 day 15 and 32 Evalled 24 years over Monto Avel TWN:y 2 days

or forty families have recently organized a Methodist Church North. At least three diths of the neoric are active Methodists, and metenths of them attend church regularly. They has not been a liquor dealer on the island of fifteen years, and it is rare that enough the horoght and drunk there to make a lower drunk. One good prother thought drunkers ness prevailed to a frightful extent.

"How long since you saw a man drunk said I to him.

"How long since you saw a man drunk said I to him.

"Only las" thristmas, "said he, "and it wasn's los" a man; there was three ragin' roun with a bottle, and they done git drunk ev'ry yeah, and more n that, sometimes."

Diligent inquiry failed to locate any liquor. Neither could I find a child born out of wellows, or a source. There was one insane man, Capt. Joe Williams. Capt. Joe used to be a sailor, and was for years away from the island. When he came back once a favorite boy ran away to adopt the father's vocation. Capt. Joe worried over this till his mind was unbinged. Now he goes about asking questions that have little meaning and telling to all who will listen as story not pleasant for ladies to hear about an adventure of his in London.

Not only are the Hatterns folks religious, they are superstitious. They believe very sincerely that evil spirits do pessess powers to vex mortals in the most remarkable ways. They close their doors at night in bad weather sometimes only to awaken at midnight and find the door open—perhaps off the wooden hinges. One man told of fluding his door reshung wrong side out. They leave their big degous after a dead caim night, only to find them nanchored—possibly adrift far away in the morning after a dead caim night. They turn in at night in the bunks of their little schooners and awaken in the morning to find their halliards tied in such knots that no one can unite them. They awake in the night and hear unaccountable noises and see strange visions, and next day their fish nets go adrift or their decoys fail



The truth of the premener's estimate will not be doubted by one who talks to the proper had an hour, but they have a very quoor notion of property rights as well when the property is true a "wrick." Not long ago the schooler Viola Burton, coal laden, came ashore here at Kinnakeet. She rested easily on the sand; and her Capitain went to Norfock for wre kers toget her oil, but sold her instead. The new owner came down here and found her looted. Even some of the surface from the life-saving station worse among the thought. They was discharged and an order issued by the department that no man engaged in the affair should over be employed in the service. Cant. Fach says that because of this order there are on y twelve men in a population of 190 at Kinnakeet from whom he can choose his crow. The rest helped to rob the schooner.

A tear of two ago a vessol went ashore near Hatteras inlet loaded with merchandise. For months thereafter the women went around bare at both ends—burchended and barefootel—according to custom, but wearing seal plusheights over their called dresses.